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OFFICE OF PETITIONS

In re Patent No. 7,563,273 :
Issued: July 21, 2009 :
Application No. 10/803,444 : PATENT TERM ADJUSTMENT
Filed: March 17, 2004 :
Dkt. No.: 020489-000410US :

This is a decision on the "REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION OF PATENT TERM ADJUSTMENT UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.705(d)," filed September 8, 2009. Patentee requests correction of the patent term adjustment from 545 days to 705 days. Patentee requests this correction on the sole basis that the Office took in excess of three years to issue the above-referenced patent.

The application for patent term adjustment (PTA) under 37 CFR 1.705(d) is **DISMISSED**.

The above-identified application matured into U.S. Pat. No. 7,563,273 on July 21, 2009. The patent issued with a patent term adjustment of 545 days. The instant application for patent term adjustment was timely filed in accordance with 37 CFR 1.705(d). Patentee argues that in view of Wyeth v. Dudas, No. 07-1492 (D.D.C. Sept. 30, 2008), the patent is entitled to an adjustment of 545 days (572 days pursuant to 35 USC 154(b)(1)(A) *plus* 160 days pursuant to 35 USC 154(b)(1)(B) *less* applicant delay of 27 days).

Under 37 CFR 1.703(f), patentees are entitled to a period of patent term adjustment equal to the period of delays based on the grounds set forth in 37 CFR 1.702 reduced by the period of time equal to the period of time during which patentees failed to engage in reasonable efforts to conclude prosecution pursuant to 37 CFR 1.704. In other words, patentees are entitled to the period of Office delay reduced by the period of applicant delay.

The Office asserts that as of the filing of the request for continued examination (RCE) on August 24, 2007, the application was pending three years and 159 days after its filing date (March 18, 2007 to August 23, 2007). The Office agrees that at the time of filing of the RCE, certain action was not taken within the specified time frame, and thus, the entry of a period of adjustment of 554 days is correct. At issue is whether patentees should accrue 159 days of patent term adjustment for the Office taking in excess of three years to issue the patent, as well as 554 days for Office failure to take a certain action within a specified time frame (or examination delay).

The Office contends that the period of 159 days of delay in issuing the patent overlaps with the 554 days of examination delay under 37 CFR 1.702(a)(1). Patentees' calculation of the period of

overlap is inconsistent with the Office's interpretation of this provision. 35 U.S.C. 154(b)(2)(A) limits the adjustment of patent term, as follows:

35 U.S.C. 154(b)(2)(A) limits the adjustment of patent term, as follows:

To the extent that the periods of delay attributable to grounds specified in paragraph (1) overlap, the period of any adjustment granted under this subsection shall not exceed the actual number of days the issuance of the patent was delayed.

As explained in *Explanation of 37 CFR 1.703(f)*¹ and of the *United States Patent and Trademark Office Interpretation of 35 U.S.C. 154(b)(2)(A)*, 69 Fed. Reg. 34283 (June 21, 2004), the Office interprets 35 U.S.C. 154(b)(2)(A) as permitting either patent term adjustment under 35 U.S.C. 154(b)(1)(A)(i)-(iv), or patent term adjustment under 35 U.S.C. 154(b)(1)(B), but not as permitting patent term adjustment under both 35 U.S.C. 154(b)(1)(A)(i)-(iv) and 154(b)(1)(B). Accordingly, the Office implements the overlap provision as follows:

If an application is entitled to an adjustment under 35 U.S.C. 154(b)(1)(B), the entire period during which the application was pending (except for periods excluded under 35 U.S.C. 154(b)(1)(B)(i)-(iii)), and not just the period beginning three years after the actual filing date of the application, is the period of delay under 35 U.S.C. 154(b)(1)(B) in determining whether periods of delay overlap under 35 U.S.C. 154(b)(2)(A). Thus, any days of delay for Office issuance of the patent more than 3 years after the filing date of the application, which overlap with the days of patent term adjustment accorded prior to the issuance of the patent will not result in any additional patent term adjustment. See 35 U.S.C. 154(b)(1)(B), 35 U.S.C. 154(b)(2)(A), and 37 CFR § 1.703(f). See *Changes to Implement Patent Term Adjustment Under Twenty Year Term; Final Rule*, 65 Fed. Reg. 54366 (Sept. 18, 2000). See also *Revision of Patent Term Extension and Patent Term Adjustment Provisions; Final Rule*, 69 Fed. Reg. 21704 (April 22, 2004), 1282 Off. Gaz. Pat. Office 100 (May 18, 2004).

Further, as stated in the *Explanation of 37 CFR 1.703(f)* and of the *United States Patent and Trademark Office Interpretation of 35 U.S.C. 154(b)(2)(A)*, the Office has consistently taken the position that if an application is entitled to an adjustment under the three-year pendency provision of 35 U.S.C. 154(b)(1)(B), the entire period during which the application was pending before the Office (except for periods excluded under 35 U.S.C. 154(b)(1)(B)(i)-(iii)), and not just the period beginning three years after the actual filing date of the application, is the relevant period under 35 U.S.C. 154(b)(1)(B) in determining whether periods of delay "overlap" under 35 U.S.C. 154(b)(2)(A).

¹ Likewise, 37 CFR 1.703(f) provides that:

To the extent that periods of delay attributable to the grounds specified in §1.702 overlap, the period of adjustment granted under this section shall not exceed the actual number of days the issuance of the patent was delayed.

This interpretation is consistent with the statute. Taken together the statute and rule provide that to the extent that periods of delay attributable to grounds specified in 35 U.S.C. 154(b)(1) and in corresponding §1.702 overlap, the period of adjustment granted shall not exceed the actual number of days the issuance of the patent was delayed.

In this instance, the relevant period under 35 U.S.C. 154(b)(1)(B) in determining whether periods of delay "overlap" under 35 U.S.C. 154(b)(2)(A) is the period during which the application was pending before the Office beginning on the application filing date under 35 U.S.C. 111(a), March 17, 2004, and ending on August 23, 2007, the day before the date the RCE was filed on August 24, 2007.

Pursuant to 35 U.S.C. 154(b)(1)(A) and 37 CFR 1.702(a)(1), 554 days of patent term adjustment were accorded during the pendency of the application for Office delay prior to the filing of the RCE. Pursuant to 35 U.S.C. 154(b)(1)(B) and 37 CFR 1.702(b), 159 days of patent term adjustment accrued at the time of submission of the RCE for Office issuance of the patent more than three years after the application filing date.

The 159 days of patent term adjustment under 37 CFR 1.702(b) overlap with the 554 days of patent term adjustment under 37 CFR 1.702(a)(1). Entry of both the 159 days and the 554 days is neither permitted nor warranted given that 554 days is the actual number of days issuance of the patent was delayed at the time of submission of the RCE.

Accordingly, at issuance, the Office properly entered 545 days of patent term adjustment, having considered the 159 days of Office delay under the three-year pendency provision in conjunction with the 554 days of delay under 37 CFR 1.702(a)(1) that had accrued at the time of filing of the RCE as well as the 18 days of delay under 37 CFR 1.702(a)(4) that occurred subsequent to the filing of the RCE, reduced 27 days for applicant delay.

In view thereof, no adjustment to the patent term will be made.

As indicated in the decision mailed June 15, 2009, no additional fee is due in connection with this matter.

Telephone inquiries specific to this matter should be directed to the undersigned at (571) 272-3205.



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